Life with the Lennons

THE STORY OF A HARD DAY'S NIGHT IN THE LIFE OF A BEATLE (AND HIS WIFE)

THE Rolls-Royce carrying John Lennon swung out of Twickenham film studios and faced a sea of fans blocking the road. The chauffeur drove on. Girls banged the doors and wings of the Rolls and screamed: "John! John!" The Beatle carried on reading and locked himself in. It was not very unusual. Just another battery of fans attacking his symbol of fame. They were beaten by a ruthless driver.

The average Rolls owner might have shuddered with horror at the thought of a few dents. "The way I see it," said John as the car glided out of Twickenham, "is that they bought the car, so they've got the right to smash it up."

It was 5.30 pm. Lennon had knocked off from work at the film set and was on his way home to dinner with Cynthia.

The next 12 hours provided a powerful look at life with the Lennons. After dinner, it was a film. After the film, on to London's Ad Lib Club. Hundreds of thousands of words later, and at 5 am on Friday, the Lennons were on their way back home to Weybridge, Surrey.

EXCLUSIVE **BY RAY COLEMAN**

"We're going to see The Ipcress File," said John, as the Rolls sped on. "We hire this cinema in town quite often."

Throughout the journey to his home, John talked — mainly about the hit parade, and of Beatles prospects with "Ticket To Ride".

"First time I saw Donovan on TV I fell off my chair. I couldn't believe it. We'd got back from Austria and I thought: 'Good God, Dylan's in Britain.' I still can't believe it.

"Yeah, great to see Dylan doing so well. I never thought he's do much with this single. Hope we get the chance to get together again when he comes over — I'll have him out to the house if he'll come."

He said it wouldn't surprise him if "Ticket To Ride" didn't arrive in the chart at the top. "It's got to happen sometime, so it might as well be now."

Lennon does not sit in his Rolls. He lies in it. His feet operate the electrically-controlled windows, and he plays ups-and-downs with them all the time. He also smokes a lot and often passes a fag to the chauffeur.

At traffic lights, people glance inside, see the mop head, and do a double take. "It isn't—it IS."

They nudge their passengers. John either stares them out with the world's most freezing stare, or ignores them.

"This is it," he said as the car pulled to the top of a long drive. "Let's go and play some records."

Lennon's country house cost him £20,000 and it looks it. It is comfortable, but not ostentatiously furnished. His new Ferrari was resplendent outside the front door.

"Marvellous car. George and I ran it in the other night down the road—in one burst of 120 miles an hour."

John said hello to Cynthia ("Cyn") and introduced his son, Julian. "He's two, I think."

After a lot of fiddling with his record player, Lennon started playing "Subterranean Homesick Blues", the next Dylan single out here, and pronounced it "great, very Chuck Berry-ish." John and Cynthia spent about a quarter of an hour trying unsuccessfully to work out the words Dylan sings.

He carted huge box full after huge box full of LPs into the lounge and finally settled for the "Rags, Blues and Hollers" album, which he loves.

Funny

Cynthia said the cook was ready to serve dinner. Over a splendid meal of chicken, red wine and apple pie and ice cream, John talked.

Easily the most pungent, electrifying pop star in Britain, the 24-year-old Beatle was in searing form. He spoke of his hate of growing old; about the Bernard Levin affair and "Not So Much A Programme, More A Way Of Life". About spastics and his image; about the British pop scene.

"The scene's in a funny position at the moment. It goes up and down a lot. It came up with Proby, then went down, and up again with Tom Jones. It's gone a bit thin at the moment, with corny songs in the chart and so on.

"There are some good things around, like the Yardbirds and the Who, but I keep thinking how much better made their records could have been.

"Then there's this folk thing. I mean, if Donovan thinks he's a folk singer, what about Count Basie? LP WINNER!"

It must be explained here that Lennon is currently playing a game all his own. He makes outrageous statements like that one, totally irrelevant to the conversation, and then adds the words: "LP winner."

It's a send-up of the Melody Maker's Mailbag writers, renowned for advancing deep theoretical arguments about what's folk and what isn't; what's R&B and what isn't. John finds it hilarious.

In between eating and drinking wine, John was getting up and down and walking into the lounge, changing records. Cynthia was finally driven to say: "For goodness sake sit down. You're giving me indigestion." She had a point.

"I think Levin was a bit soft saying that bloke's an imbecile," said John. "He's been waiting for people to have a big go at him for a long time. Now it's happened. Well, if he thinks he can get away with it like Proby did, he can't. What about R&B? Signed Al Saxon, Stoke-on-Trent. LP winner!

"I like the pop shows on TV. Even enjoy seeing the rubbish. I like plays as well. There have been some good ones lately. I like pop shows first, plays second. I watch 'Not So Much A Programme'.

"I like that bloke Patrick Campbell and Harvey Orkin. But sometimes they get terrible drags on the panel. Altogether, it's a bit of a loser programme.

"I was asked to go on it but I turned it down. I'd only go on if they had people on the panel I like, otherwise it would just be a nasty night. They'd probably carve me up and if that happened I'd get bloody rude."

On growing old: "It's very difficult to imagine. I sometimes try to look into the future and stop myself doing it because it's such a drag thought. Thinking about an old Beatle, or a grey-haired Beatle, or a spastic Beatle.

"But the thought of somebody coming up and saying: 'How old are you?' and me saying: '50' is a bit off-putting. You know what I hate about the thought of growing old? When I was 16 or 17, people kept saying to me: 'Wait till you're 20 or 24, and you'll laugh at how you looked and behaved at 16.' And bloody hell, they're right.

"If I grow old and miserable, I'll paint myself green and red and have balloons popping out of my earholes."

Cynthia gave him a look that could only have meant: "You're talking rubbish again."

Would everything now be an anti-climax for the Beatles after so much success?

"I want no more from being a record star," said Lennon. "I'm not disinterested, but there is more now than to make good records and sell them. I'd like to see us making better and better films. That's very difficult, and unlike pop music it allows you to grow up as a person.

"I'm not craving for any more gold discs, even though they're a nice boost. That's all over. I just want to be an all-round spastic. LP winner."

There must be a deep psychological reason for it, for John is obsessed by spastics. He talks about them a lot. Why?

"I mean nothing nasty, honest," he answered, jumping up and down again. "I don't think I'd know a spastic from a Polaroid lens. I'm not hung up about them. When I use the word 'spastic' in general conversation, I don't mean to say it literally. I feel terrible sympathy for these people—it seems to end of the world when you see deformed spastics, and we've had quite a lot of them in our travels.

Collapse

"In the States, they were bringing hundreds of 'em along backstage and it was fantastic. I can't stand looking at 'em. I have to turn away. I have to laugh, or I'd just collapse from hate.

"Listen, in the States, they lined 'em up and you got the impression the Beatles were being treated as bloody faith healers. It was sickening.

"I use the word spastic as slang. It's old fashioned to say 'he's got a leg missing.' If you talk about spastics at least you're modern."

Cynthia gave him a rebuking look. "Enjoying your dinner?" asked John.

Since the rise of the Beatles, John has gained the image of the vicious, outspoken Beatle. How did he like it?

"It's been very useful," he replied. "A lot of slimey little reporter types seem to have got to fear me. It's fantastic. I didn't work for the title of the vicious Beatle, the

Continued on page 16

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HINES—THE ONE-MAN BAND OF THE PIANO

EARL FATHA HINES, the latest American jazz star imported by the Manchester Sports Guild, opened at the club's basement jazz club last weekend.

Again it was a memorable jazz occasion—thanks to the sheer enthusiasm of northern jazz fans, the hard work of Guild secretary Jenks, and jazz organiser Jack Swinnerton, the Alex Welsh band and the very special talents of Earl Hines.

Hines is one of the last of the piano showmen. He sits, knees apart, casually at the keyboard, spotlights playing on him, and a mile-wide grin bridging the gap between the audience and the stage.

His hair shines; he wears a permanent "knocked-out-to-be-here" expression on his face and you could easily imagine a Jelly Roll Morton diamond set in the middle of his gleaming teeth.

He is an extrovert like Waller, Jelly Roll and the legendary names of the past, but there is nothing hammy or show-biz about his playing.

It's strictly for now, vital, definitive and bursting with the distilled spirit of jazz.

Fred Hunt, Alex Welsh's pianist, stood listening in amazement. He said: "Isn't it great to see someone who plays the whole piano?" And, in a sentence, that's exactly what Hines does.

He's a one-man band using only two hands and eighty-eight keys. His imagination runs wild on that forte of the piano, "Tea For Two" and he punches and stabs out endless variations at will.

The style is all so personal. He sounds unique, but you can hear a lot of other pianists in him—especially Garner in the quieter moments.

Hines' right hand is like a solo instrument backed by the left. It has a character and an automony of its own. It has tremendous power and can whip out snarls and whoops which at times resemble a trumpeter's gimmicks. And Earl's sense of dynamics is something you have to be born with.

He can carry on endless experiments with time signatures, but like every aspect of his playing, the excursions have purpose.

He can execute a complicated Tatumish run with gleaming ease and then mount a two-fisted attack that would have Fats shouting.

Hines broadminded outlook embraces his ranges from "Monday Date", "You Can Depend On Me", "Ain't Misbehavin'" through to "Satin Doll", "Misty" and "Lullaby Of Birdland". He even throws in a couple of Nat King Cole style vocals to show how much he's enjoying himself.

Hines, a man of remarkable physique, is sixty and looks forty-eight. But his playing is ageless.

The Alex Welsh band, which showcases Hines so well and has a delicious stomp-up with him at the end of the shows, deserves special mention.

In its style, it is one of the best bands in the world today. Star is clarinettist Johnny Barnes who also plays fine tenor and wild baritone.

Newcomer Roy Williams, on trombone, is bursting with swinging ideas and Lennie Hastings sparks one of the most cohesive rhythm sections Britain has ever produced.—J.H.

● **WHERE TO SEE HINES: Tonight (Thursday), London's Islington Town Hall; Brighton (9), Nottingham (10), London's 100 Club (11), Birmingham (12), Botley (14), Bath (15), Osterley (16), Hemel Hempstead (17), Manchester Sports Guild (18 and 19).**

Braff to join Alex Welsh band for June Bath Festival

RUBY BRAFF

AMERICAN trumpet star **RUBY BRAFF** may star with **ALEX WELSH** Band on final day of the Bath Festival which runs from June 10-26. Events scheduled for the festival include folk night (June 10) starring **SPINNERS, SHIRLEY COLLINS and TOM, DICK and HARRY. DUTCH SWING COLLEGE BAND** appears June 17 and U.S. tenorist **BEN WEBSTER** with **BRUCE TURNER'S** Jump Band

● DOONICAN

NEWS EXTRA

(18). Other bookings are **RONNIE ROSS TENTETTE** (19), **CHRIS BARBER** Band (24), and all-night carnival (25) featuring **MONTY SUNSHINE** Band, **TEMPERANCE SEVEN, BACK O'TOWN SYNCOPATORS, AVON CITIES** and **RIVERSIDE** Jazzbands.

ROLF HARRIS returns from Australia to start new BBC Light Programme series on April 15 . . . ITV's entry for 1965 Montreux Festival is "Mainly Millicent", starring **MILLICENT MARTIN.** Southern TV are entering their own show, starring the **NEW CHRISTY MINSTRELS.** BBC-TV's entry is the **BENNY HILL** Show.

Israeli government has called off tour there by **SWINGING BLUE JEANS** on grounds they cannot risk teenagers causing damage . . . **TOM SPRINGFIELD** debuts as "Juke Box Jury" panellist on April 13 . . . **PETER JAY** and Jaywalkers for fortnight in "Pop Proms" at New York's Latin Quarter in June . . . **ROCKIN' BERRIES** new single, "Poor Man's Son", out April 23. They are in TV's "Ready, Steady Goes Live!" on April 23 and Light's "Easy Beat" (May 2).

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JACK DORSEY Band signed two-year contract with Polydor Records and plan single and LP releases. The band is featured on Tuesday on the Light's "Jimmy Young Sings and Introduces The Jack Dorsey Big Band" on Tuesdays . . . London's Marquee Club presents evening of film in place of live jazz on Sunday (18). Included will be a showing of "Jazz On A Summer's Day".

Welsh singer **RICKY VALLANCE,** who hit the top of the chart years ago with the death disc "Tell Laura I Love Her", makes a recording comeback tomorrow (10) with release by Decca of "Six Boys" . . . Folk music festival at Scarborough College from noon to midnight on July 3. Signed: **SPINNERS, WATERSONS, BOB DAVENPORT** and the **RAKES, CYRIL TAWNEY, LOU KILLEN** and **SHIRLEY COLLINS.**

MIGIL FIVE start two-week tour at Stockholm on June 4 following with visits to Australia (June 20), New Zealand and dates in Auckland and Wellington . . . Switzerland's top beat group, the Five Doradios, tour Britain from June 5 . . . After success of his first jazz club at Southall, **ALAN ELSDON** opened a second club at the White Lion, Edgware, Middlesex, this week. Elsdon band is resident at both clubs.

BARRON KNIGHTS and **KEN DODD** for summer season at London Palladium . . . **PETULA CLARK** voted top girl singer in 1965 poll run by Paris magazine Music Hall . . . **VAL DOONICAN** starts week's variety at New Theatre, Oxford, on Easter Monday (19). With Val will be **JACKIE TRENT,** who will also join him for summer season at the Palace-Coliseum. Douglas, Isle of Man, from July 5.

* * *

SEEKERS and **RUSS CONWAY** start in two Easter Sunday concerts at Blackpool Opera House . . . **LENNIE KANE** Quartet with **SUSIE STEELE** is to be resident from June 1 in Highland Room at Blackpool's new Mecca Locarno . . . Germany's best-known jazz group, the **KLAUS DOLDINGER** Quartet, makes six-week ten-country tour of South America this summer.

* * *

FRENCH trad group, **LES HARICOTS ROUGE,** open first tour of Britain at St. Alban's Jazz Club tonight (Thursday). **CHRIS BARBER** will go to Continent in exchange. Other dates set for the Frenchmen include: Nottingham (tomorrow), Manchester Sports Guild (10), Newcastle (11), Norwich (12) and Morden (13).

COPS N'ROBBERS group from Watford accompany U.S. blues star **JOHN LEE HOOKER** on five week tour of Britain from May 10.

American piano star **EARL HINES** interviewed on Southern TV's "Day By Day" on April 14.

* * *

U.S. GOSPEL star **MARION WILLIAMS** and her company open on Monday (12) at London's Vaudeville Theatre in a new programme of spirituals, folk songs and freedom songs.

Marion was voted top in this year's Melody Maker Critics' Poll in the Gospel and Blues section.

MOODY BLUES returned home to their house in Roehampton, London, last Monday to discover burglars had stolen two guitars, four stage suits, tape recorder and an alto flute, worth £500.

* * *

Stones TV?

A PALLADIUM TV appearance by the Rolling Stones was described as "doubtful" by their co-manager, Eric Easton, on Monday.

He told the MM: "They have been offered a Palladium next Sunday, but if they do it, I want to be sure they will have their type of audience, and not a Mums and Dads audience. And I would rather they taped a performance beforehand."

Easton said he doubted if the Stones will release any more records until next month.

They go to a sell-out performance at the Paris Olympia at Easter, and on April 22 they fly to Canada to open at Montreal on April 23. They come home at the end of May.

In June they do shows in Scotland at Edinburgh, Glasgow and Aberdeen, and also fit in a trip to Germany.

Streisand may tour

BRITISH promoter Mr. Mervyn Conn is going to America on April 20 to negotiate for appearances here by Barbara Streisand.

He told the MM on Monday: "I shall negotiate for three appearances here by Barbra Streisand, backed by a British orchestra. I shall also negotiate for Nancy Wilson during my 16 day trip.

"I will visit New York, Las Vegas, Los Angeles, and Nashville and I hope to bring over some folk artists.

"In October I promote a 21-day tour of the UK by Bo Diddley, in conjunction with Joe Collins and Marshall Chess of Chess Records."

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LIFE WITH THE LENNONS

from page 11

biting Beatle, the one with the rapier wit. It's a load of crap.

"It's handy being tagged like this. When I meet intelligent and hip people I have to be on my toes not to disillusion them. The people who have fallen for my image and publicity go to Paul, which I think's funnier still.

"Paul can be very cynical and much more biting than me when he's driven to it. 'Course, he's got more patience. But he can carve people up in no time at all, when he's pushed. He hits the nail right on the head and doesn't beat about the bush, does Paul. LP winner."

Cynthia said if they were going to leave the house by 8 pm, they'd better move. John said he wanted to look round the house and play more records. He said hello to his huge dog, Nigel—"he's soft so I bought him to protect me." One of the rooms in John's house contains 11 guitars.

John and Cynthia took off in the Rolls for a West End basement cinema. The Rolls car radio blared out Radio London.

A record by Bobby Goldsboro' came on, and Lennon said: "'Ere, that's the bloke who turned me on to contact lenses during the Orbison show. He used to be Orbison's guitarist."

Next tune was "I'll Follow The Sun", by the Beatles. "I suppose they think that's folk so they might as well plug it," said John. "Paul wrote that when he was ten. So how can it be folk? LP winner."

A showband disc caused John to have a go at them all. "We played opposite one on our first public appearance in a theatre — at the Pavilion, Liverpool, years ago. We all fell about with laughter. It was so funny — I can't believe they're taking themselves seriously.

"They were old fashioned then and they're the same today. I haven't anything against them personally, but their music is quite incredible — lousy, I mean. It's like watching a long, long talent contest. All the musicians are about 28 or 30 and they look so bloody soft leaping and dancing about and singing about stupid things. Surely they can't get VERY big?"

The Rolls arrived at the cinema. Soon, John and Cynthia were joined by Ringo and Maureen, George and Patti Boyd, Paul and Jane Asher, film producer Walter Shenson, and road managers Neil Aspinall and Malcolm Evans. They were served drinks.

John kept singing "Goldfinger" to the theme tune of The Ipcress File. Afterwards, he declared the picture suffered from a slow start but was "not bad." Paul was completely knocked out by it; George and Ringo liked it.

On to the Ad Lib Club—John in his Rolls, George in his E-type and Paul in a Mini. After about an hour, John and Cynthia were the only Beatles left. They drank whisky and cokes.

"Notice the place fill up after we arrived?" said John. He spent the next few hours talking. To Alan Price of the Animals, to Dionne Warwick. Lennon and Price shared some side-splitting recollections of early fights they had "on the way up." — Lennon in Hamburg, Price in Newcastle.

At 4.30 am, it was time to evacuate a closed Ad Lib Club. Cynthia slept in the car on the journey to Surrey. John said: "Let's go and wake up the others." But he didn't. It suddenly occurred to him that he had to be on the film set at 8 am.

As the car passed Twickenham, John said: "I might as well sleep in a chair at the studio."

He was still very much awake, joking and pontificating about the pop scene, laughing at the time.

"I bet you won't be joking in a couple of hours," said Cynthia. "He's terrible first thing."

JOHN GAVE HER THAT CYNICAL LOOK AND STARTED SINGING "A HARD DAY'S NIGHT". IT SEEMED THE RIGHT THING TO DO.

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FRIDAY

ALEX CAMPBELL. Owen and David Fleming at the Scots Hoose.

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SATURDAY

ALL ABLE Tinkers at the Scots Hoose.

ALL NIGHT FOLK. NEW PRINCE, 23 Gerrard St., Mid.-6 a.m. **ALEX CAMPBELL, JOANNE HINDLEY-SMITH.**

AT THE CELLAR. Cecil Sharp House, N.W.1. **JACK & MARGARET KING, MIKE ROBINSON,** plus guest **LINDA DREW.** Commence 8 p.m.

HOOTENANNY, BALLADS AND BLUES, King of Corsica, 90 Berwick Street, W.1. **PETE STANLEY, WIZZ JONES, THE LEVEE BREAKERS.**

THE CENTRE, 88 Balham High Rd., S.W.12. **DAVE & TONI ARTHUR. AL STUART.**

TROUBADOUR. Earls Court, 10.30. Martin Carthy, Harvey Tucker.

WIMBLEDON FOLK CLUB. Parish Hall, Edge Hill. **BILL CLIFTON,** The New Frontiersmen, Paul Layton.

SUNDAY

AT SCOTS HOOSE. Newsingers.

SUNDAY cont.

CROYDON, OLIVE TREE, 3 p.m. **DORRIS HENDERSON JOHN RENBOURNE**
Closed Easter Sunday

HAMPSTEAD. CYRIL TAWNEY, TERRY GOULD, THE NORTHWEST THREE. The Enterprise, 7.30. Come early.

KINGSTON. Union Hotel, 8 p.m. **DEREK SARJEANT, LEN HOLDEN ROD STRADLING.**

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TUESDAY

BERT JANSCH. OWEN HAND AT THE SCOTS HOOSE.

CROWN, TWICKENHAM. Malcolm Price Trio, residents.

FOLK POT, New Tiger's Head, Lee Green. Guest, **BOB DAVENPORT AND THE RAKES.** Residents, **THE DROVERS.**

THE CENTRE
STEVE BENBOW

TROUBADOUR. Linda Drew, Joanne Hindley-Smith.

WEDNESDAY

BOREHAMWOOD RED LION. BERT JANSCH, LES BRIDGER, GUESTS.

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JACK ELLIOTT in concert on May 26, at Acton Town Hall. For tickets phone SHE 2574 after 6.30 p.m. or from the Atlas.

MARQUEE CLUB. See display advert. on page 17.

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